

THE FOUR YEARS

Saturday, August 24, 1872.



"I never in my life found myself in as awkward a position as I did at that moment"—p. 738.

TWO STORIES IN ONE.

BY WILLIAM GILBERT, AUTHOR OF "DE PROFUNDIS," "SHIRLEY HALL ASYLUM," ETC.

CHAPTER XLI.—A SURPRISE.

IT would be difficult to imagine a more marked change than took place in our method of life at the termination of our four years' residence in Dresden. During that time we seemed utterly unknown,

and now to a certain extent we were known to the whole of the *élite* of society in the city. I say to a certain extent, for my real position was still kept secret from all with whom I was acquainted. I had passed as

a widow in good circumstances, and as without vanity I may say I was not destitute of personal attractions, the reader may easily imagine I did not remain without offers, all of which, it is needless to say, I unhesitatingly refused. At first perhaps this might have excited some sort of curiosity, but it soon died away. At length people began to say that I had been so fondly attached to the husband I had lost, that it was impossible for me to entertain the idea of marrying another, and I was merely looked upon as an ultra-romantic Englishwoman, for somehow, in the eyes of foreigners, all Englishwomen seem endowed more or less with a strong spice of romance. How surprised would they have been, had they known the real circumstances of my case, that so far from grieving for the loss of my husband, I held his very memory in abhorrence and contempt. I could say more—that I never remembered him without a feeling of degradation that I had been united to so worthless and contemptible a man.

If little, however, occurred worthy of especial notice during the first four years of our residence in Dresden, it was very different in the fifth. We had been invited to an evening party at the Countess Bernstoff's, but my mother being indisposed, I was obliged to go alone. I would, in fact, rather have remained with her, but as I was now on terms of great intimacy with the countess, and as she liked to have me with her on occasions of the kind, I was unwilling to disappoint her. I was the first guest who arrived, and explained to the countess the cause of my mother's absence. I also told her that had I been invited to any other house than hers, I should certainly have remained at home.

"That would have greatly grieved me, for more reasons than one," said the countess. "In the first place, I should have lost your society; and in the next, an English gentleman, who I understand speaks but little French and no German, is to be introduced to me to-night, and I should like to have some one who can act as an interpreter between us if necessary."

"Who is he?" I inquired.

"I do not know more of him than that he is a very handsome man—not even his name. He is, I believe, of an excellent family, and what you call a baronet, but I do not know what the equivalent title is among us Germans."

The last remark of the countess gave me great relief. Without the slightest apparent reason, I had somehow dreaded to meet my countryman. I will confess more. A voice had seemed to whisper in my ear, that in the new comer I should find my old friend Colonel Morpeth—why I should have thought so, I know not. When the countess mentioned the stranger as being a baronet, my alarm vanished, and I volunteered with great readiness to assist her in every way in my power.

The guests now began to arrive, and I listened

with some anxiety to each name announced, without for some time hearing an English one among them. At last, when the room was about half full, the usher announced Major Stirling and Sir Thomas Morpeth. My curiosity to see the father of Colonel Morpeth induced me to look earnestly towards the door, when, judge of my surprise, instead of seeing the father, Colonel Morpeth himself entered the room.

"Let me introduce you to a countryman," said the countess, addressing me in French, "Sir Thomas Morpeth—Madame de Vernieul."

How I looked I do not know, probably foolish enough; I have this for my consolation, however, that I believe Sir Thomas was as much confused as I was. To do him justice, he was the first to recover his self-possession.

"I have had the pleasure of meeting Madame de Vernieul in England."

"Then, as you are old acquaintances, I will leave you for a little while to talk over past times together, and I will return to you in a few minutes."

The countess now left us, and I believe I never in my life found myself in as awkward a position as I did that moment, nor did Sir Thomas at first seem much more at his ease. He of course began the conversation by asking after my mother and Adeline, then how long I had been in Dresden, and how long I intended to remain. All these were answered, and the conversation then flagged for some moments, when the same questions were again asked. In a little time we began to thaw, and we talked with more freedom. At length he went so far as to ask whether he might not be allowed to call on us, as he should much like to see his little friend Adeline and my mother. Of course I could make no objection, though my assent was not given with any great cordiality, and I resolved at the time that if possible I would be from home when he called, or at any rate that I would not see him. I even went so far as to ask him the day of his intended visit, as I would prepare my mother for it, hoping that he would take it as a hint that his visit, to say the least, would be inconvenient. He told me he would call on the morrow if I thought my mother would receive him, and we were then joined by the countess.

For some little time we remained in conversation together, I acting as interpreter when Sir Thomas's French became somewhat faulty. Afterwards Major Stirling, who spoke the language fluently, joined us, and taking advantage of the opportunity, I slipped out of the room and returned home.

The next morning I informed my mother of my meeting Sir Thomas Morpeth at the Countess Bernstoff's, and of his proposition to call on her. My mother was naturally surprised.

"What are we to do, Clara?" she said. "How wrong of you to invite him! If his acquaintance was objectionable when we were in England, it must certainly be so now."

"You do me an injustice, mamma, to imagine I gave him any invitation. On the contrary, his presence in this house will be quite as objectionable to me as to you. He proposed calling, and I could not refuse him. Had I done so, I could have given him no reason for it. I thought then the better plan would be for me to leave home about the time of his contemplated visit, so that you might receive him alone. From the conversation that took place between you before we left England, you will be able to speak more frankly to him than I, and I know you have tact enough to let him understand, and that too without hurting his feelings, that we do not want him here. Now, like a dear good mother as you are, summon up all your energy, and smooth things down as comfortably as you can."

My mother listened but with indifferent attention to my remarks, evidently turning over in her mind in what way she should receive the baronet on his arrival. Little more of any importance passed between us, and it soon became desirable for me to leave the house in order to avoid meeting Sir Thomas. Taking Adeline with me, I determined first to visit the countess, and if I found her at home to remain with her as long as the rules of courtesy would allow. We found both the countess and her little daughter were in, and the two children shortly afterwards were sent out of the room to amuse themselves together. As soon as we were alone the countess said to me, "How very unkind it was of you to leave us yesterday evening at the early hour you did, and without even saying good-bye to me. I should have thought you would have been rather pleased to have met your old acquaintance."

"It was rude of me, I confess, but I felt nervous and unhinged yesterday evening, so I thought I had better leave you."

"What a remarkably handsome and agreeable man your friend Sir Thomas is. Have you known him long?"

"I have known him for some years, but not at all intimately. I met him twice at the French Ambassador's, and after a lapse of some years we again met at Dover."

"There is no great intimacy between you then?" said the countess.

"None at all," I replied; "more casual acquaintances than we were could hardly be imagined."

"I am surprised at that," said the countess, with a somewhat sarcastic but good-natured smile on her countenance.

"And why should you be surprised?" I asked.

"Although Sir Thomas said but little to me concerning you, it struck me that he thought a good deal more than he said. And this you know piqued my feminine curiosity, and I asked Major Stirling a few particulars about him. I found the major willing enough to converse about his friend, but only on general matters. He told me Sir Thomas was a

baronet, a man of immense wealth, having lately inherited the family estates, and that his mother was also dead. I asked if he was married. 'No,' replied the colonel, 'he is not—and more, I hold him to be a confirmed bachelor.' 'With his handsome appearance and large fortune,' I said, 'I should have thought it impossible for him to have escaped matrimony, do what he might to avoid it.' 'Well, it does seem strange, certainly,' said the major; 'but still such is my opinion.' The count, who was present at our conversation, then remarked that possibly Sir Thomas admired unsuccessfully some lady who will not or cannot listen to him. The major replied that more unlikely things have occurred in this world. Of course, my dear," continued the countess, "you may easily imagine my curiosity was by no means allayed by these answers, and certain thoughts respecting an amiable friend of mine, whom I will not name, came before me. Indeed, I could not divest myself of the idea that she was the individual whom the baronet admired, but as you say your acquaintance with him was of the most casual description, of course the lady I allude to could not be you."

"You do me too much honour if ever you thought so," I said, trying to laugh, but failing most miserably in the attempt, and if I did smile at all, it was in that forced manner which must have told the countess her suspicions were not altogether without foundation. Moreover, I felt that my naturally pale face was at that moment dyed a deep red. That the countess also noticed it was a fact, as I could easily perceive by the attempt she made to hide a smile of triumph at her own ingenuity.

"I know I am colouring up," I said at last, determining to carry it off with a high hand, "but be assured it is not because you are right in your suspicions, for I know well enough whom you mean; it is merely because—in fact—"

Here I could find no more words, and the countess, laughing, broke in by saying, "Do not trouble yourself, my dear, to make any further excuse, for I can easily perceive by your ingenuous manner that I had not the most remote right to imagine you to be the lady alluded to, and having admitted so much, we may talk upon subjects of love and marriage like two sister-gossips as we are. Let me ask you how long have you been a widow?"

Here was indeed a terrible question for me to answer. My face changed from red to a deadly pale. I would willingly have made no reply, but that was impossible, so I almost at hazard said, "Six years."

My emotion was noticed by the countess, who fortunately attributed it to the wrong cause—that her words had called up painful reminiscences connected with the supposed death of my husband. With the tact of a well-bred and amiable woman, she immediately and skilfully changed the subject, by making some remark about Adeline and her own daughter,

and we continued to converse on maternal matters generally till it was time for me to take my leave.

I will not attempt to describe at any length to the reader my feelings after I had left the countess. So disturbed was I in my mind, that although I felt fully persuaded the baronet's visit to my mother must have been over, I hired one of the open carriages I saw in the street and drove round the gardens into the town, so as to have the opportunity of regaining my self-possession before I returned home. I could not disguise from myself that during the four years I had been in Dresden my admiration of the baronet had remained latent, not extinct, and his presence the evening before, as well as the conversation I had had with the countess, fully proved it. There remained but two alternatives, either he must leave Dresden very shortly, or that we must do so.

CHAPTER XLII.

SIR THOMAS MORPETH.

ON my arrival at home, the first person I met on entering the house was Gretchen. I asked her if my mother were alone, and she told me she was, and that I should find her in the drawing-room. I then inquired if any one had called during my absence. Gretchen informed me that a gentleman had called shortly after I left, that my mother had received him, and that he had remained with her for some time. I asked his name, but Gretchen, although she attempted to pronounce it, did so in such a manner, and with such an accent, that it was impossible for me to understand whether the visitor were really Sir Thomas.

Gretchen now went up-stairs with Adeline, and I entered the drawing-room, where I found my mother. She looked steadily at me for some time, and as I thought with an angry expression, though afterwards it appeared to me one rather of anxiety. She made no remark, and sitting down, I attempted to open a conversation in the usual English manner, by saying something about the weather. My mother replied with great brevity and was then silent. More than once I attempted to converse with her, but each time with no better success.

At length this reticence on her part became insupportable, and I determined to remain as silent as my mother. My curiosity, however, seemed to increase as each succeeding minute passed, till I could bear it no longer.

"Has Sir Thomas Morpeth been here?" I inquired abruptly.

"He has, my dear," was her reply.

"Did he stay long?"

"More than an hour."

"Does Sir Thomas intend remaining long in Dresden?"

"I think he said a day or two," replied my mother.
"A day or two!" I remarked, greatly surprised, having understood from the Countess Bernstoff that he intended remaining longer in Dresden; "a day or two! are you quite right, mamma?"

"Quite certain, my dear."

"Does he intend returning here again?" I next inquired.

"That entirely depends upon circumstances," said my mother. "He possibly may return in a month or two, or he may remain away altogether."

Another silence ensued. At last I could support the infliction no longer, and rising from my chair I said, "Why do you annoy me in this manner, mamma? you well know what it is I wish to hear, and how important it is to me, and yet, without cause, you remain silent on the subject, as if you did so on purpose to vex me."

"Clara, my dear, I remain silent because I do not know where to begin," said my mother, slowly and impressively.

"Begin anywhere, mamma. Your mysterious manner really frightens me, without any apparent reason why it should do so."

"Well, then," said my mother, "Sir Thomas Morpeth's father and mother are both dead, and he has come into the title and estates. The latter are, I understand, of immense value."

"All that I am aware of, mamma."

"And pray where did you hear it?" said my mother, sharply.

"This morning, at Countess Bernstoff's."

"Clara," said my mother, "did you hear anything more?"

Remembering the conversation which had taken place at the countess's, I possibly coloured a little as I gave my mother a negative reply, although as far as regarded the question she had put to me it was a perfectly true one. My mother, evidently noticing the blush on my face, said to me, "Are you quite sure, Clara, you heard nothing more?"

"Quite sure, mamma," I replied, feeling at the time the colour becoming deeper on my face; "quite sure; why should you doubt me? I think it very unkind of you," I continued, beginning to cry, "you know I never told you a falsehood."

"That I admit, Clara."

"Then pray go on, mamma, and do not keep me longer in suspense."

"Sir Thomas Morpeth intends returning to Dresden in a couple of months, if all goes on as he wishes," said my mother, laying great emphasis on her words.

The manner in which she had spoken was so impressive, that I felt persuaded she had something important to inform me of. We remained silent for some moments, for my heart throbbed so painfully I could not speak, and my mother, evidently from

some unknown cause, seemed afraid to continue the conversation. At last, making a great effort, I said to her, "There is something more, mamma, I feel sure; why do you not say it?"

"Yes, my dear, there is," she replied, "but I have hardly the courage to say it."

"But it must be known sooner or later," I said.

"Well, then, your husband, M. de Vernieul, has been dead more than two years."

It would be impossible for me to describe to the reader the mental and physical effect the news of my husband's death had on me. I felt completely stunned and bewildered. The room seemed to spin round me, and yet I felt no fainting sensation. The news was most painful to me. It could not indeed be otherwise, considering the ties that had existed between myself and M. de Vernieul—and yet, I will admit, I felt no sorrow. Possibly the reader may think I ought to have done so, and that my behaviour was heartless; that the death of a husband, no matter how worthless he may have been, merited more grief on the part of his wife. All this may be true, and that I was little to be complimented on my behaviour. I must leave myself in the reader's hands. I had resolved when I began my narrative to give a truthful description of the principal events which had occurred in my life, and I will make no exception even in the present case. How long the dazed or stunned feeling under which I was labouring continued, I know not, certainly for several moments, and then consciousness gradually began to return to me. The first thing that impressed itself directly on my mind was that my mother was watching me attentively. She made no remark, however, nor did I, and I sat there some time longer, her eyes bent on me the while. At length her gaze became positively painful to me, and rising from my chair, I said to her, "Mamma, I must leave the room; I feel so bewildered, I cannot collect my thoughts."

For the next few days I remained at home, so as to avoid any possibility of meeting Sir Thomas Morpeth.

After that I went out, and on these occasions, though why I know not, I invariably insisted on being accompanied by either my mother or Adeline. Once or twice I spoke of Sir Thomas to my mother, but her answers were so abrupt, that I mentioned his name no more.

Although Sir Thomas's name was no longer on my lips, I must candidly confess he was very frequently in my thoughts. Although I received not a line from him, nor met with any who knew him—for the Countess Bernstoff had gone to her estate in Saxon Switzerland—I lived under the impression that I should hear from him. The two months at last expired, and during the time I heard neither directly nor indirectly from him. He did not return to Dresden, and I began to feel vexed with myself that my thoughts had dwelt so frequently on him, and I had just come to the magnanimous resolution to cast him from my mind, when one morning Gretchen placed a letter in my hand. On opening the letter, I saw it was addressed from Munich, and I easily identified the handwriting, though I had seen it but once before. I believe I was longer reading that letter, short as it was, and clear as was its subject, than any letter I had ever read in my life. It was from Sir Thomas Morpeth, making me an offer of marriage. He told me he should have done so long since, in fact, as soon as he heard of the death of M. de Vernieul, but in spite of all his inquiries he had been unable to find me. He further said that should my answer be favourable, the day following the receipt of my letter would see him in Dresden. If, however, I refused him an interview, he would not again intrude upon me.

Can you guess, reader, what answer I gave him, or shall I tell you? No, I should prefer that you guessed it. Or, if you like it better, answer the question candidly in your own mind what you would have done, had you been in my place—and that in all probability you will find I did.

(To be continued.)

ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD.

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We have spoken in a former paper on "Illustrations of the Word;" we now propose to speak about the "Ministry" of that Word—the human ways and means by which God has designed to spread that Word, so that it shall be made known to men, and be understood of those that read it, and bring forth, as from a living and incorruptible seed, the fruits of everlasting life.

The great ministry of the Word is through the operation and agency of the Holy Spirit; this was God's great Gift to men, as the sequel to the ascension of Jesus into heaven. After the gift of the Holy Ghost, came the lesser and subordinate gift—of human agencies and ministries of men. Thus the apostle expresses it—"When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men; and he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pas-

tors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Eph. iv. 8, 11, 12).

Upon the great errand of this ministry were the disciples sent, when their Divine Lord gave them their great commission—"Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature" (Mark xvi. 15). This was the first and original institution of the Christian ministry, and of the office of preaching the Gospel (or evangelising). In this, too, lay the great and essential difference between the priests of the Jewish Church and the ministers of the newer dispensation: the Jewish Church was endowed with a *sacrificing priesthood*; the Christian Church with a *preaching ministry*. This is the great duty and office of the Christian ministry—to "preach the Gospel." A story is told somewhere of the great Duke of Wellington, to this effect: A military chaplain, from abroad, was inquiring of the duke as to the measure of recognition he was to accord to missionary work, and speaking rather disparagingly of Christian mission labour, he was thus rebuked by the brave old hero—"Sir, what are your *marching orders*? are they not, 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel'?" Then go and do as your orders command you."

The word that is for the most part used in the New Testament to express the office of the Christian minister is the word *κήρυξ—a herald.** There is much significance in the transfer of this word from its forensic and diplomatic use into the Christian vocabulary. The office of the herald (*κήρυτς*) was to summon the people to the public assemblies; to lay down and promulgate the laws of the games and combats; to separate combatants in the arena or in the battle-field; to proceed as ambassadors to an enemy's country or camp; to make a formal declaration of war or peace; and to propose terms and conditions from one side to the other. Hence, in the olden times, the public herald was regarded as a messenger from the gods, and as being under the special protection of Heaven; and the persons of such officers were, accordingly, accounted sacred and inviolable.

This word, then, has been transferred and carried forward, with all its import and significance, to the Christian Church. We are "ambassadors" for Christ; every exercise of the secular office of the "herald" is now assigned to us, in its very highest and most spiritual sense. And what has this institution of the ministry already accomplished? Notwithstanding many human and personal infirmities and drawbacks, the Christian

ministry has been mainly instrumental in maintaining spiritual religion and the true knowledge of God in Christ in the world; it has tended to preserve the salt of the earth, and to raise up generations of witnesses for God; it has uttered forth its faithful protest in behalf of truth, and its earnest resistance against error. The Christian ministry has, indeed, failed to accomplish to the fullest extent its great mission in the world; but is not this for the most part owing to the nature of the soil in which the good seed is sown—the uncongenial soil of the world and of the human heart? The "heralds" of the Gospel announce the glad tidings to those who are by nature reluctant to receive it—ofttimes to those who are deaf to all appeals for good; indeed, the terms and conditions of the Gospel are announced to those who are actually "dead" in trespasses and sins, and only by the communication of the life of the Spirit can they arise and hear and hearken and obey. Still this power of the Spirit is ever ready to co-operate with any earnest, faithful, living ministry; and generally the measure of a church's ministerial life and earnestness is the ratio of the ingathering of the fruits of the Spirit. The Ministry of the Word must be like the Word itself—a living, active, earnest, loving influence and power.

Let us here indicate some of those "illustrations" by which the Ministry of the Word is set forth in Holy Scripture, and in our ordinary experience:—

As *workmen*—"for the work of the ministry" (Eph. iv. 12). This, again, is illustrated by many forms of handicrafts—*Builders*: some for special and some for ordinary departments of the work; some for laying the foundation; some for building thereupon; some for preparing the materials ("for the perfecting of the saints," Eph. iv. 12); some as "wise master builders;" and all these building up divers sorts of materials—"gold, silver, precious stones," or else "wood, hay, stubble." See this whole "illustration" worked out by the apostle in 1 Cor. iii. 10—15. In the same context the apostle speaks of the ministers of the Word as *husbandmen*: some "planting," others "watering" that which has been planted (iii. 6—8); and, as to the results of both of these forms of labour for God, he includes both in one verse—"We are labourers together with God: ye are God's *husbandry*, ye are God's *building*" (iii. 9). That is to say, we are only the workmen, whether in the "tillage" of the spiritual field, or in the "building" of the spiritual house; those who are beneficially ministered to are the result in either case—the cultivated field (*γεωργίαν*, the *tillage*), or the erection (*οικοδομή*, the *house-building*), of God.

All this reminds us of the work and the workmen employed in building Solomon's Temple. For this erection materials were to be fetched from all

* See Matt. iii. 1 (John's ministry); Mark xvi. 15 (the apostolic commission); 2 Tim. iv. 17 (*κήρυγμα*—Paul's preaching). Whereas the sacrificing priesthood under the law is called *ἱερεῖα* and *ἱερωνύμιον* (Heb. vii. 5, 11, &c.). ..

quarters—from the forests of Hiram, and from the quarries of the land; and after these materials had been prepared, each for its proper place, then were they brought up to Jerusalem, to the site of the Temple; and there, “without sound of hammer or axe,” each material part fell noiselessly into its appointed niche. Thus is it that “the kingdom of God cometh not with observation.” In the context of this “illustration,” I have heard it said that ministers in their ministry, and in building up the Church, are to make all the noise in their study and in prayer; there they must turn their books and beat their brains, and thence bring all ready to the pulpit; and with plainness and in all simplicity and easiness, edify (*i.e., build up*) the people committed to their trust.

Those who fulfil the ministry of the Word are, furthermore, spoken of under the following “illustrations:”—As *Ambassadors*—with a message to deliver and terms to negotiate, as between God and man (2 Cor. v. 20); as *Angels*—as being sent—a word very similar to that of *apostle* (Rev. ii. and iii.); as *Evangelists*—announcing the glad tidings, the evangel, of the Gospel (2 Tim. iv. 5); as *fishers of men*—the very title and office (and yet only an “illustration”) to which the disciples were called by their Lord (Mark i. 17); as *Overseers*—indicating the watchful eye and diligent care that becometh those that have charge of souls (Acts xx. 28); *Pastors*—they the *shepherds*, and the members of the Church the sheep of the flock (John xxi. 15, 16); it is an “illustration” shared by Christ himself, who is the “Good Shepherd” (John x. 11), the “Chief Shepherd” (1 Peter v. 4); as *Stars*—shining in the light, and reflecting that light to others (Rev. i. 20); as *Watchmen*—ever on the alert, wakeful and vigilant, lest any thief should come to steal away the hearts of men from God or from his truth (Ezek. iii. 17); as *Witnesses*—as Paul was made “a minister and a witness” (Acts xxvi. 16), and all the apostles were “witnesses” for their Lord (Acts v. 32).

The Ministry of the Word is “like a stewardship, and its ministers are as *stewards*. Thus St. Paul speaks—“Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God” (1 Cor. iv. 1); and in the same place he insists upon that fidelity that ought to characterise a steward intrusted with his master’s property, that he be “found faithful.” Indeed, so strongly did the apostle feel his responsibility in this matter, that he regards his ministry as a duty, a bounden duty, a “necessity,” from which there is no retreat; and a “woe” involved if he does it not—“Yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel;” and this, as he goes on to say, because “a dispensation (*i.e., stewardship*) of the Gospel is committed unto me” (1 Cor. ix. 16, 17). Hence,

also, St. Peter exhorts—“As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God” (1 Peter iv. 10).

Manner and style have, as accessories, much to do with the Ministry of the Word. These are the circumstances and surroundings that either help or hinder the message in its delivery. However omnipotent the Word of God, and however “mighty through God,” yet we are now speaking of that Word, not as in God’s hands, but as committed to “earthen vessels.” Here human advantages and human infirmities would operate, for better or worse. The true “manner” of the ministry ought to be derived from the ever-present thought that we are proclaiming the offer of the “great salvation” to sinners. This would mean *from the heart to the heart*; and that is the secret of all—the very heart and soul of all true ministering.

Still, there would be room and scope for many kinds of style and character of ministry. Impressions are conveyed in many ways: one is solemn and serious; another is illustrative and descriptive; another is urgent and earnest; another is weighty and dogmatic; another is light and easy and familiar. These are some of the “differences of administration,” and of the “diversities of operation,” spoken of by the apostle (1 Cor. xii. 5, 6), and I trust I may say that, if used in the right and proper spirit, “it is the same God which worketh all in all.” A Scotch merchant tells his experiences in this respect, which may be taken as an example: “I went to St. Andrew’s,” he says, “where I heard a majestic-looking man (Dr. Blair), and he showed me the majesty of God. After him I heard a little fair man (Rutherford), and he showed me the lowliness of Christ. I then went to Irvine, where I heard an old man (Dickson), and that man showed me my own heart.” Now, all these impressions were for good; each different man and manner produced its measure of edification. “But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will” (1 Cor. xii. 11).

It is possible that men may alter in style—by growing experience, or by riper age; just as the mellow ripeness of the fruit supersedes the tart and pungent taste of the unripe. An aged minister of the Word once said, “When I was young, I thought it was the *thunder* that killed the people; but when I grew older and wiser, I discovered it was the *lightning*. So I determined in future to thunder less, and to lighten more.” And this was well said; and such experience may well be acted on. Only this, whatever may be the manner or style, let it never be lost sight of, that the people must *understand*. A learned bishop is said to have earnestly prayed this prayer—“O Lord, send me

learning enough, that I may preach plainly enough.'

Above all, the Ministry of the Word ought to be *practical* and *to the point*. How much was meant and designed to be conveyed to our minds by the illustrative designation, "fishers of men!" What patience; what waiting endurance; what bearing of disappointments; and how very thorough the results. "Fishers of men!" to bait them, to catch them, to net them, to keep them, and all for Christ! to draw them out of their old and native element of sin; to cause them to die to their old nature, so that a new life and a new being may be formed in them!

Every engagement of our hands, to be real and productive, must be practical. "Is it a' done?" inquired a lady of the venerable Dr. Chalmers, at the conclusion of an important meeting in Edinburgh. "It is a' said," replied the venerable man; "it now remains that it be a' done." And so with preachings and ministries; it must be not only "all said," but also "all done," not only by the

people who have heard, but also by the preacher who has said it all.

Here is a goodly motto for the Ministry of the Word: Ernest, Duke of Luneburgh, adopted as the device for the coin of his realm, a lamp burning, and these four letters underneath, "A. S. M. C.," standing for "Aliis Serviens Meipsum Contere" (In serving others, I wear myself out). This was an "illustration" of a faithful Prince; it would also be of a faithful minister; as the apostle saith, "I will very gladly spend and be spent for you" (2 Cor. xii. 15.) Such is the work, and such the character of the work, of any one who undertakes, with zeal and fidelity, to discharge the Ministry of the Word.

" His only aim to praise and glorify
The blessed Jesus as enthroned on high;
To preach his Blood's atonement, and impress
On sinners' minds His healing Righteousness;
Salvation's finished work to all declare,
His greatest glory, his unceasing care,
To bring to Christ the erring and astray,
Direct them to the Word, the Truth, the Way."

LILIAN.

 OMING from the garden,
Tripping through the corn,
Past the fragrant meadows
In the flush of morn,
I met a pensive maiden,
Marvellously fair,
Lilian the gentle,
Lilian golden-hair.

Queen of all the village
In the years gone by,
Queenlier now thy beauty
Beams upon the eye;
Firstfruit of sweet promise,
When the Spring is gone,
Of the splendid Summer
Swiftly drawing on.

Large-eyed, wond'ring Lilian,
With the classic grace
Seated on thy forehead,
Floating o'er thy face—
Wouldst thou read the future,
What its burden saith?
Draw no veil asunder
That to Hope is death.

Some heart with Love's own glory,
And pulsing blood, shall thrill—
For who could see thy lustre,
Yet gaze unconquered still?
O dainty, dainty Lilian,
Tripping o'er the green,
To one true captive spirit
Thou shalt be always queen.

GEORGE SMITH.

THE DINGY HOUSE AT KENSINGTON.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "ABOUT NELLIE," "THE TROUBLES OF CHATTY AND MOLLY," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER VII. (continued).

 RESENTLY their conversation came to a lull, and they listened to Mr. Denton, who seemed as if his special qualification was talking, as in truth it was. People asked him out to dinner because he did talk. Very good chatter it was in its way, small and light and easy, unflagging and unforced; and as there never was anything much in it, it re-

quired little answering, and so other people were able to eat their dinners in peace, if they wished to do so.

"By the way," Captain Finch said to Margaret Albury, who sat next to him, "have you seen any thing of old Grant Stanmore of late years?" It appeared the speaker had only recently returned from India.

"No, I quarrelled with Adelaide, and it ended in



"Firstfruit of sweet promise,
When the Spring is gone,
Of the splendid Summer
Swiftly drawing on"—p. 744.

a general cut. I am not sentimental myself, but I don't care for such very worldly girls; so I grew tired of her at last."

"I met old Stanmore the other day," put in Mr. Albury; "he looks as well preserved as ever, has still his vague story about the entail and the West Indian property, and still paints daubs, and fancies himself an artist."

"Poor old fellow, he always dabbled in art," the soldier answered feelingly; "and Adelaide was so beautiful, and going out spoilt her."

There was little in him altogether, but the good that the little contained was uppermost as he spoke in the defence of the one woman he had cared for in his life, and who had thrown him over. Perhaps it was because he knew that her falseness had been the consequence of the half-love, or seeming half-love, he had given to a proud ambitious woman, who much as she prized the world, would, had he asked her, lost it "all for love," and thought the riddance a remarkably good one. He had been lukewarm, and she proud and impetuous, and had allowed her head to conquer her heart, and thrown him over. He had never been in earnest with any woman since, he never would be again, but he had generosity enough to defend her.

"Does going out spoil one?" asked Polly.

"Sometimes. Have you been out much?" and he looked as if he considered it doubtful or not whether she was spoilt.

"Oh no, I have never been out before to-night at all, never anywhere—I mean to other peoples' houses; only just for walks and—" but she stopped, for it was going up-stairs time, and she had to rise. "No one ever asked me before," she added, as she went out of the doorway.

"What a shame!" he answered; and he thought, as he summed her up mentally, that she was rather a pretty girl, a little bit of a coquette, but a very simple one, as innocent as a kitten, and as fresh as a daisy.

Polly was glad when Mr. Brandford entered the drawing-room a quarter of an hour later, and she waited, with her eyes turned in another direction, for him to take a seat near her, but to her disappointment he crossed over and sat down by her mother. He seemed to forget her very existence indeed, until he heard the sound of the piano, and looking up saw Polly trying to hobble through Thalberg's "Home, sweet home;" then he rose and stood near her. She could not manage it, however, her fingers trembled and refused to flutter through the runs, and at last, confused and vexed, she stopped in the middle.

"Why do you spoil that lovely thing, which in spite of its beauty, is so hackneyed by every school-girl, that unless uncommonly well played it is a nuisance?"

"I don't know," she said, astonished at his plain speaking. "I didn't like to play anything too easy, it looks so silly."

"Can't you sing?"

"Oh yes, but only very simple songs."

"Then try and sing one," he said, "and I will go and keep your seat on the sofa till you come."

She had a delicious voice, and when she was reassured, and the clear, sweet, though not powerful tones, were heard, the conversation lulled till the last note of her song had died away.

"That was much better," he said, as she went back to her seat; "much better than 'Home, sweet home.'" That was all, and she was rather astonished on the whole; she thought he would have praised her performance as Robert Welch had done. "I am coming to see you," he said, as Captain Finch took his seat at the piano, and commenced the prelude to "The Bridge"—that song so dear to drawing-room tenors.

"Are you?" she said, pleased at first, but suddenly remembering how shabby the house was, and how little hospitality he was likely to receive.

"Yes, I think I know your house, and your mother has invited me. Is it not next door to one with bright green blinds?—I pass it often going to see some friends—and it has red curtains at the windows. I've noticed it because it looks such a dingy house, and stands out in contrast to its neighbours. I should say your landlord is a screw, and your father an easy tenant."

"It is our own house—" she began; but Margaret Albury came up, and stopped the conversation. She wanted them to hear Captain Finch sing "The Bridge," which he did in a style of his own. He fancied he had a great deal of pathos, and that he threw it all into the song.

"How do you like it?" asked Margaret Albury, as Captain Finch informed his hearers, with a very perceptible sigh, that "the burden had fallen" from him.

"He has a great deal of feeling," she answered, doubtful of what to say.

"Yes, a keen sense of the pathetic, and none at all of the ridiculous."

Polly looked at the singer, and thought of the girl she had heard him mention at dinner; not that she had ever heard of her before, or knew anything of her history, but merely because she had a vague idea, she hardly knew why, that Adelaide Stanmore was a name she would some day hear again, and that man seemed like a link in her history.

"Isn't Miss Albury amusing?" she said, turning to Richard Brandford.

"Very; she has a habit of expressing other people's thoughts, especially their disagreeable ones;" and Polly did not know what to make of his tone, only discovered suddenly that her mother was moving, and that it was time to go home.

She never knew how it was, as she was leaving the house with her father and mother, that Richard

Brandford appeared and observed that it was a lovely night, and supposed they were going to walk on that account.

"Yes," said Mr. Dawson; "moreover we haven't a carriage, and I object to cabs."

"Not that we could not afford to keep a brougham, the same as the Alburys, only Mr. Dawson—" began Mrs. Dawson, but her husband gave her a violent nudge, which brought her remark to an abrupt ending.

"I think it is better to walk," Polly said, though a few minutes before she had so wished for a cab.

"So do I," he answered; then he hesitated a little, and was going to offer his arm, but saw that she had put her hands into her muff, and did not seem to expect it.

"Don't you find those things a great trouble to carry?" he asked, as he walked by her side.

"What, a muff? Oh no, I am so fond of muffs," and she hugged the dried goat-skin a little closer.

"Indeed," he said, with a half notion that this very innocent girl was chaffing him. "Why, pray?"

"They hide one's hands so splendidly. It doesn't matter if your gloves are full of holes."

"Oh, doesn't it! I should have thought it mattered a great deal if a young lady's gloves were full of holes," he said grandly, rather amused and astonished at the answer.

"Do you live near this?" Polly asked, thinking it time to change the subject.

"Yes—in the Bayswater Road that is. Well, here is your house, so good night;" and having listened to a very effective little speech from Mrs. Dawson, he departed.

"He came out of his way on purpose to walk home with me," thought that vain Polly. "I wish I knew when he means to call, I'd make myself look nice." Then she thought of Robert Welch. "Oh! how different Mr. Brandford is," she said; "and how proud he seems, though he is so agreeable. He would never have stood up in a woollen comforter, with a portmanteau in his hand, humbly begging my pardon for having tried to kiss me," which was quite true—he wouldn't. Inwardly she thought perhaps that Robert Welch had not made the most of his chance. "Poor Robert," she said, though why "poor" she hardly knew, "he is very good-hearted, but—well, I don't know what it is, but it is rather a pity that the very nicest people don't monopolise the good hearts."

Two letters arrived for her in the morning. One from Cumberland, and one from Robert Welch—the first she had had. She would have opened it eagerly the day before, but she hesitated a little now, and thought of Richard Brandford—she did not know why—and said a little wonderingly, "Oh, if Robert only knew!"

(To be continued.)

THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.—IV.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE BOOK AND ITS STORY."

CONCLUDING PAPER.

HAT a marvellous twenty years have been the last that have passed over us! What two decades of freedom have followed that freedom for the Vaudois Church and freedom for Turkey and the ancient Christians of the East!

The remarkable work of the Holy Spirit of God—following on the circulation of his written Word—has since been pressed on our attention on every side. The Divine influence swept over the continent of America, and half a million of souls seemed to have been born in a day. The whirlwind of rebellion expended itself in India, and left British power still in the ascendant. India was still given to England that she might fearlessly offer to it her Bible, made ready in its thirty languages, as the voice of the living God. She has now introduced steam-vessels on its broad rivers, and her railways traverse its length and breadth, to speed the way of the Book of Life; while the Bible-woman may freely pass from village to village, to read to her poor sisters the wonderful words of God. The gates of even China are open; and we

have secured a treaty which admits "outside barbarians" to scatter New Testaments in "the Flowery Land."

In Africa the beloved Moffat at last beholds the fruit of his thirty years' work—the Bible, "the mouth of Jehovah," complete in the Sechuan, the key language of all the tribes of the interior.

In 1861 came freedom for the Bible in Madagascar by the death of its tyrant queen, and the praying people of that vast island were found to have preserved in their memories the priceless book. They had been always mending their old Bibles, more precious than gold, and dearer than life; and in the absence of all living teachers, the hundreds of converts had, amid all their martyrdoms, become thousands, for the "more they were afflicted the more they grew."

And by means of American missionaries we had, in 1860, become acquainted with a wandering people in Burmah (India beyond the Ganges), called the Karen, who have many marks of an Israelite origin. While Burmah yet refused the Word of God prepared for her, amid a fight of afflictions, by the admirable Judson, many a poor

unnoticed Karen had passed the door of the Christian teacher, singing in his own then unwritten language legends of the Fall and the Flood, which could only have come from our Bible.

By 1853, the jubilee year of the Bible Society, Dr. Mason had translated the whole Bible into Karen also, and the results of its distribution have been the conversion and baptism of many thousands. These are the people "who waited for the Book," of which they had so many memories, and have now hailed it from the hand of the long-looked-for "white foreigner." These poor Karen, despised and enslaved by the Burmese, command our warmest Christian sympathies, whether amid the recesses of their flowery jungles, in their now Christian villages, or as meeting for worship and missionary effort within bamboo tabernacles among the purple pinnacles of the Toungoo hills.

The massacres of Christians in Syria during the same era have only seemed to make way for Syrian "mothers' missions," and the education of their children in our Holy Scriptures by the beloved and departed Mrs. B. Thompson. The circulation by the various Bible societies of the world now increase by millions a year, though these are few among earth's hundreds of millions. The British and Foreign Bible Society, and all who are touched by its wide influences, are always on the watch to embrace new opportunities, and to enter in at doors of which no mortal man could have loosed the seals. It has the Translations and the brave Agents always ready, and rich have been the rewards of its diligence in this era of freedoms bestowed from on high, although the sinful nations have often had to pay for them the price of blood.

In 1821, it was remarked in their Report that they already perceived the alarming and rapid strides of infidelity towards its final object:—"The lovers of light and of darkness coming nearer to the crisis of that last contest which shall separate the adherents of each. Unbelief and superstition were already increasing in equal proportion to the exertions of all the humble followers of Jesus Christ, who love to think of his appearing, and join hand in hand to promote the coming of his kingdom."

And now in 1872—fifty years later—might we not still more emphatically use the same words? The enemies are the same, the superstition of ages is not yet vanquished; and since the Vaudois were set free the Pope has sought to meet that evil by the bolder reiteration of all the former errors of his Church. In the face of all the knowledge of Scripture that has flooded the Protestant countries of Europe for 300 years, it has been the most earnest work of his reign, as "the Vicar of Christ," to prove that the Virgin Mary partakes of the Deity of her Son; that she too had a miraculous birth, and that she, like him, was taken miraculously

into heaven. In addition to this placing the human on a level with the Divine in the person of the Virgin, whose own meek spirit "rejoiced in God her Saviour"—thereby showing that she needed to be saved from sin—Pius IX. has also propounded, as the secret of tranquillity for all the earth, a second dogma—*his own* infallibility; assuming to be the "supreme director of the consciences of all men, from the peasant to the prince." Thus also has he impiously set aside the Word of God as the standard of faith, and propounded the judgment of man in its stead, in defiance of Him who "will not give His glory to another," and called a council from the world's ends to confirm the stupendous folly. It was a council gathered, not to evangelise the nations, but to poison them with fresh error; and at its close the feeble old man—worn out like his system, in the thick darkness of a fearful storm bursting over St. Peter's—by the light of a candle, attempted to utter in his delusion the "lie" that he himself believed. He was answered by the flashes and artillery of Heaven, and ere he could reiterate the offence, it was crushed out from the world's memory in a moment by the thunder and the misery of a European war.

Well may the British and Foreign Bible Society, in its review of the last two or three years of its existence, note these years as the most remarkable of the century in relation to its own work. Marked indeed they are, alike in the history of nations and churches. We have seen battles fought and won of unexampled compass, old landmarks shifted, one empire collapsing and another in resurrection; but however varied and startling the course of events, they have all granted to the Bible Society more and more the field of the world. All the revolutions of the last decade have been favourable to the circulation of the Holy Scriptures. All interdicts of rebuke are passed away. Among all other freedoms, the Book is free as never it was before. While Russia has freed her serfs and America her slaves, truly the "Word of God is not bound," it has gone forth to all the world on a scale hitherto unknown. Not only in war supplies to France and Germany, but Denmark, Sweden, Russia, Austria, Italy, Turkey, all have made increased demand for it.

The Report of the Society for 1871 names a circulation of almost four millions—as many copies as were supposed to exist in the world at all at the era of the Society's birth.

Meanwhile, of the five Powers which coalesced to restore the present Pope after his expulsion from the Capitol in 1848—viz., the Grand Duke of Tuscany, the King of Naples, the Queen of Spain, the Emperor of Austria, and Napoleon III.—four have fallen, and the other (Austria) has been driven out of Italy, and into doubtful relation

with the Papacy. Can there be a doubt in the review of all these changes of the overruling hand of God, and of "his Word not returning to him void?"

The last device of the great enemy is to attack the Book itself. He cannot, as in the age of Mahomet, impose afresh a False book on the belief of nations at the point of the sword, but he can easily infuse into the minds of those ignorant of and indifferent to the True Book satirical doubts as to its value and authenticity. It is the old temptation that served for Eve, "Hath God said?" that seems to be accomplishing much present mischief. Satan can find lecturers who can attract large audiences of the uninformed, and of those who love to live as they list, who will hear with complacency that "it is the time to undermine, assault, and destroy all religious beliefs that reason and science deem false—that the fall of man and the curse of God against his disobedience can be denied, and therefore the atonement proved unnecessary—that the light of nature suffices to show up the absurdities of a so-called Revelation, which it will now be well to cast to the moles and to the bats!" and, indeed, no more to teach even to our children.

Alas for England, if her sons of science and her sons of toil are seduced to listen to these sophisms! She has borne to all nations in this last century the message of the Book; she has been its grand storehouse—she is so still; she has seen the Word of the Lord strike its roots like the banyan-tree into every soil over which spreads the shadow of its "leaves for the healing of the nations." On her own shores she has received testimonies to the truth of its histories and prophecies, disinterred from a grave of 3,000 years, as if reserved until now to draw the attention of her archaeologists, in an age of doubt, to the old Book, which else they might never have studied, but which alone can explain what they find on the tablets and cylinders of ancient Nineveh, and on their more recent treasure, the Moabite stone.

Let those who doubt the Bible study it further. "The finger of God and the lips of God are never at variance." Would it have been worthy of the Author of all truth to give and to preserve for over 3,000 years mere myths and fables for the delusion of all past generations only to be confuted by the acuteness and wisdom of *this*?

If the inquirer into truth is an Englishman, let him only look down into low London, and mark

the changed lives and homes of many of its most hardened reprobates, who have simply listened to the Message from God. Every such man and woman in a poor court or lane is worth more than any volume of evidences of Christianity, and Bible Missions can point to them by thousands.

We must not neglect the mention of modern Home Missions. Lord Shaftesbury, who has spent his life in their service, and his thousand coadjutors in the school of philanthropy, have perpetually endeavoured to meet the wants as well as to cultivate the self-help of the needy by improvements in their dwellings, by the rescue and training of their lost and ragged children, by all kinds of protection for the overworked and oppressed.

If the Bible has evangelised and civilised foreign nations, what has not been the result and reaction of *united* bodies of Christians like that of the Bible Society at home? We need name only the City Mission and its Bible-men, and the lowly handmaid of both great societies, the London Bible and Domestic Female Mission, and its Bible-women. The two latter number between them 800 devoted agents; and the reaction of their very real work has been the calling forth beyond itself of more zealous effort in all our various Christian churches, among those who prefer to work more precisely within their own pale. The Church of England, with its national prestige and connected forces, the Methodist, the Baptist, Congregational, and Presbyterian bodies, also that of the Society of Friends, have all turned their attention to the state of our home poor, and are endeavouring to mend it on Bible principles; whilst all that had been practically good likewise in the service of Sisters of Charity attached to the Roman Church has been welcomed still more by poor fathers and mothers, when associated and springing out of the *message from God*, as contained in his Word. They have welcomed this message as indeed a "missing link" between them and those who wished to help them to help themselves—the only help worth their having.

The foundation of God standeth sure. "The Book of God reneweth its youth as years roll on," and has it boldest, noblest message for these last days, whose faithlessness it foretells. Meanwhile the last loving invitation is uttered before the day of vengeance upon scoffers, when He who gave the Word will come again to prove its truth—"compel them to come in, that my house may be filled."

L. N. R.

STORIES OF "THE QUIVER COT."



HE next time I went into the ward I was greeted by the little patient of whom I last wrote, with, "Come along, I've laid still all the time since you comed, but it aint got no better yet."

Four is an early age at which to learn patience on your back, but what a nature to work upon. How soon those little spirits find their way into one's heart. Giving their love so freely, they take yours quite unknown to yourself. There are many particularly nice little boys in the hospital just now. One was made perfectly happy for a long time by being allowed to hold his nurse's watch, forgetting his pain in the pride of the temporary honour and glory of such a possession. Among the little girls there is a dainty maiden of three, or possibly a trifle less—a midge, a fairy, so very, very pretty. I don't know her name. The first time I saw her she had just come in, and been laid in her tiny white nest. I stood for a moment at the foot of her cot, and she looked up at me with the most touching little smile, saying so plainly, "I'm so little, and you're all so big, but I'm not afraid—not much at least."

Involuntarily I said, "You pretty thing, no one will hurt you, ever," and out came the tiny hand so graciously, and the wee, wee mouth opened to give a little order—showing how much at home the baby felt, even without "mother."

"Tover me over."

Being "toved over," she and dolly were quite cosy and content. A more gracious little lady would be hard to find. The next morning, when the physician who has the management of her case, arrived by her bed, and was about to examine the little chest—so sadly, painfully, delicate—the atom again gave a pretty little command in the gentlest possible tone, "Nurse, set the gentleman a chair." Another time, after a rather long examination, which, made by strangers to her—very gently and tenderly, I need not say—must have been a little trying to so sensitive a little maiden, she looked up into the big faces, and remarked in her polite baby fashion, "Are you doin' to do it adain? you may if you 'ike." This will seem very wonderful to some of us, who know what spoilt children can be in sickness, but it is quite true, and I can give no idea of the wonderfully sweet, pathetic little face and voice.

A lady said to me of this child, "To think of that pretty little innocent creature bearing so much." What it must be to her mother to have her out of her sight I cannot imagine; only the real kind of love could so forget itself for the little one's good. How God teaches us by his youngest and best. Seeing such little trusting creatures, one's heart yearns to help them, for His sake who suffers them

still to come to Him. I told dear Willy about this little girl, and he seemed not in the least surprised.

"Yes," he merely said, "everybody likes being here, 'cos everybody's kind to 'em."

One day, in the end of April, our Willy had a wonderful thing happen to him. Rather early in the morning he was taken out of his little cot, dressed as far as such an operation was possible for a little boy who cannot bend his poor, stiff body, and then, with a hood over his face, or rather round his face, which made some people, who had not heard that a "Willy" was now in the "Quiver Cot," think him a little girl, into a cab went Willy with his nurse and one of the ladies, off and away, through the busy every-day streets, so noisy and novel to a little man who had looked at the ward ceiling for many an hour each day and night, for seven or eight months, rattling over the stones, carried so carefully by his clever nurses, that the jolting was only a pleasure;—off and away to a photographer in Cheap-side, where, under many difficulties, Willy's picture was taken, to Willy's great surprise and delight. And on the wonderful card is our thin, pale Willy, smiling or serious, just our dear, wise, loving boy. Perhaps some of his friends may care to have a copy to put side by side with other little pictures, scarcely more dear than Willy would be to them if as well known. Certainly the sight of his little face so soon to be taken, for a time at least, out of our sight, will help to remind them that he, in his weary, but peaceful and happy hours of weakness, prayed God to bless them all, all his "good friends in the book," for so he thinks of them, "who pity and love the sick children." With his little hand in mine he promised me one, "whichever you likes best, but I likes the *not-smiling* one best for you, 'cos you sees me when I don't laugh, and when we talk 'them things,' and then, when I'm gone up in heaven, you can say, 'That was my little Willy, what I knew a long time, and when it was the right time, God took him up to heaven;' and you needn't be sorry, because I shan't be ill then; and I don't mind being ill now, 'cos God loves me, and everybody loves me, and now mother has got work in the hospital I see her every day, and that's nice, that is; and Henry comes, my great, big brother Henry, on Sundays; but poor father can't come now, he's so ill, but I send my love to him, and he sends his love to me."

When the time came for my final good-bye to him, I knew he would say something I should always like to remember, some tender little legacy of sweet child-love and kindness. I had scarcely hoped to have seen him for a farewell at all, as I did not fancy he would linger month after month as he has done; and it is impossible, as far as human judgment can decide, for me to see my darling again. He had said kind,

sweet words to me, such as friends do say when they are parting for ever. God teaches them the words; and then I knew I must go.

"Darling Willy, I shall *hear* about you, and write to you," I said.

"Yes, you will write to me, and I will write to you, as long as I can," he answered; "and when will you come again?"

"My pet, I shall not see you again, *here*." I could hardly say the words, for he is dear to me, that little shadow.

Most sweetly he spoke, with his dear brown eyes full of tears. "Not here; no, I shall be gone before the winter; but you will come to heaven and see me there."

"My darling, I hope so; indeed I hope so."

"You *will*," he said solemnly; "for I ask God always in my prayers to let you."

And so I left him, after promising once more to give his love and best thanks to all his kind friends who write to him, and send him such nice presents. I need hardly say of such a child, that all his belongings are free to all around him. God grant we may be the better for knowing Willy. I think we shall. Since I left London I have had a nice little letter from him, telling me of a treat of oranges given to him, and by him to the whole of the front ward; also sending Bobby's love, who doesn't intend to be forgotten again. The flowers sent lately have been highly appreciated. Willy loves flowers dearly, and the sight of their beauty cheers his little life; and, indeed, the wards look different rooms without the brightness of the flowers. So the kind senders may know their gifts are appreciated and wondered over, causing little eyes who have never seen such fair sights in waking moments to brighten, for "the country where the flowers grow" is, in the ideas of many tiny Londoners, something between heaven and Victoria Park." This is really true, and only taken from little funny, but by no means irreverent, speeches made to me over "tosties," i.e., cowslip balls.

Now that the ground is laid ready for deep digging of the foundation of the new hospital, there is no garden—a great loss to nurses and patients. Really it was hard to judge which was happier, the poor child who had lain weeks, or even months, between life and death, just sufficiently recovered to be carried gently by skilful hands out among those dear old smutty trees (sure to mend if once able to "go out"), or the nurse, proud and smiling, having "brought the case through." Not a "case" when in the old garden. Never; "a pet," "a beauty," any sweet name that is. The more the child has needed care and attention, the more a pet to the kind creature. Only "a case" when painful remedies are to be applied or the medicines given and taken. Then, of course, a case is a case, and must be so, and it is astonishing what the firm, kind voice of a nurse will effect with a poor little

creature who will do nothing, take nothing, from the mother. Once, when a little girl whom we all loved very dearly indeed was entering the dark valley, when sight and hearing were failing, and she called out, "I can't see, come with me, nurse, speak out loud to me," her nurse just took hold of the pretty hand and kept it, and the little one was satisfied, and so parted lovingly from her good friend, taking to the very last, in sweet and most touching obedience, whatever nourishment the nurse put to her lips.

But the old garden. It is a garden no more, and I am very sorry. There is something wonderfully cheering in a London garden, and the cats even had an interest for some of us, especially the boys, who have learned how to laugh, some of them, after serious days of weakness and pain, by seeing the astonishment of a cat who found—as well as himself—that he could throw a stone again. Many hundreds, aye, thousands of little cockneys will remember the dear old hospital garden as their very happiest playground as long as they live. I shall always cherish tender memories of it, seeing as in a sacred picture certain faces and forms who are now among all beautiful things, in the green pastures of the Good Shepherd, whose name they first learned to love in the Children's Hospital; and in learning a little themselves, they taught their teachers very much.

There will be a Children's Chapel in the new building, and I hope it will be very beautiful. I can imagine how they will love it, and their nice bright little services there. It is to be a "Children's Chapel" altogether, and a kind friend has undertaken the expense of building it.

M. S.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

280. Give in St. John's words the cause of the Saviour's triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

281. Give the occasions on which Christ addressed the words "Fear not," or words similar to them, to the trembling hearts of his servants.

282. The concluding words of three of the prophets are quoted in the New Testament. Where?

283. Where is the term "Forerunner" applied to Christ?

284. We read of the ministry of angels on five distinct occasions in the earthly history of our Lord. Give them.

285. The first promise God made to Abraham consisted of two parts. Give them.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 719.

273. "We remember the fish which we did eat in Egypt freely" (Numb. xi. 5).

274. One in the case of Saul and his sons (1 Sam. xxxi. 12); the other mentioned by Amos (Amos vi. 10).

275. They could not marry out of their own tribe (Numb. xxxvi. 6, 7).

BIBLE NOTES.

HEALING THE IMPOTENT MAN AT BETHESDA (John v. 1-9).

THERE is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water." The circumstances connected with this miracle have been the subject of dispute—the position of the pool, and the occasion on which Christ wrought it. It is difficult, if not impossible, now to determine the precise position of the pool. Nor surely does it very much matter; if we acknowledge the truth of the miracle, we need not trouble ourselves very seriously as to the exact spot where it took place. Christ was at Jerusalem, whither he had gone to be present at one of the Jewish feasts. But which feast? It is most probable that it was the feast of the passover. We should be justified in rendering the first verse of the chapter which contains the account of this miracle thus: "After this there was the feast of the Jews," that feast which is the mother of all the rest—the passover.

The meaning of the word Bethesda is "house of mercy," a very appropriate name for a place where Christ was now about to display his almighty power, in showing mercy upon a poor impotent man, who could get no one to show pity upon him, and give him a chance of deriving benefit from the healing waters to which he was so near, and from which he had seen so many go away healed of whatsoever disease they had. We are told why this multitude of sick people was here—they were waiting for the "troubling of the water." What this was we have no accurate means of knowing; we can throw no more light upon it than has been vouchsafed by the Holy Spirit writing by St. John—"An angel went down at a certain season, and troubled the water." Of this we may be sure, the Evangelist would not have spoken of this place in the way he has done if the circumstances connected with it were not in reality miraculous, or if its virtues were ascribed to it merely by credulity or superstition. We know that water of itself has no power of healing either the body or soul; but this pool, stirred by an angel, possessed curative power. Some have fancifully ascribed a part of the healing properties possessed by this pool to the flesh of the victims used in the Temple sacrifices having been washed in it; and as this would chiefly occur during great festivals, its efficacy would, according to such a notion, be more powerful at "a certain season." But there does not seem any reason, as far as we can judge, to suppose that any of the circumstances related in connection with its healing powers were not in the strictest sense miraculous.

"A certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years." This man, so afflicted in body,

and for such a time, attracted the great Healer's attention. Christ needed not that the sufferer should pour forth to him his complaint of the many and sad disappointments he had met with. The Lord in his omniscience knew all, and therefore, without dwelling on these and such like topics, he asked him, "Wilt thou be made whole?" Such a question, we may rest assured, was not asked without a purpose. He had been long trying to get into the pool first after the troubling of the waters, and as yet had not succeeded. Despair may have begun to settle down upon him, and the hope may have begun to desert him, that he should ever be healed, therefore the object of the question may have been to stir up a hope once more, and to awaken a desire in his heart for the benefit which he was so soon to receive. His answer, "Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool," is no direct reply to the question. He may have heard of the fame of Jesus, but he certainly did not know his appearance. He who questioned him seemed to him probably one who took a passing interest in his case, and his answer would seem to bespeak his pity. He had no one to come to his aid, and yet time after time (what interval there was between each visit we know not) he came there, and was always prevented by others from gaining his desire. What a reproof is contained here for our languor and despondency and weariness in prayer! Our natural inclination is, when we do not get what we wish for, and as speedily as we think we ought, to desist from asking. What encouragement for us to persevere, for in the end we shall reap if we faint not! Without further trying his faith, the right hand of power was extended in his behalf. He heard words that must have been quite unexpected by him, but at the same time very welcome.

"Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." The man instantly obeyed the command; he did not delay to ask, "How can I, who am so weak as not to be able to get soon enough to plunge into the troubled waters of the pool, do as thou biddest me?" No, he did what he was told to do, thus showing faith, and in the execution of the command healing was imparted to his whole frame. This miracle was wrought on the Sabbath. The day of rest was specially chosen by Christ as the fittest season for Divine acts of mercy. He thus shows his oneness with the Father. God rested on that day from all his works of creation; but on that day of rest he specially works in doing acts of mercy to the souls of his creatures in the public services of his Church. The ground that Christ took up as a justification for his working miracles on the Sabbath was this—"My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."